



What is the Noosa Biosphere Reserve?

In September 2007, the former Noosa Shire was awarded Biosphere status by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere International Coordinating Council. The Noosa Biosphere Reserve is the first in Queensland.

A biosphere reserve is an international conservation listing, recognised by UNESCO, for an area that demonstrates innovative approaches to sustainable development. In awarding Noosa with this honour, UNESCO noted the strong sense of community involvement in relation to human settlement within a natural environment that positions this Biosphere, of the 507 sites worldwide across 102 countries, as a benchmark.

Biosphere reserves go beyond confined protected areas – they involve the development of quality economies based on local community action and entrepreneurship, sound science, public-private sector partnerships and networking.

Biosphere status can be beneficial at three fundamental levels: lifestyle factors for individuals; new avenues for economic developments through sustainable business practices; and globally to help position the region on an international level as a knowledge bank for sustainable development.

UNESCO recognition aims to raise awareness among local people, businesses and government authorities on environmental and development issues, and helps attract funding from different sources.

Biosphere reserves contribute to the global network of high profile pilot sites or 'learning places' to explore and demonstrate approaches to conservation and sustainable development, providing lessons that can be applied anywhere.

In August 2008, the Sunshine Coast Council approved the Constitution of the Noosa Biosphere Limited that outlines the company purpose, objectives and powers, operational structure and representation. Noosa Biosphere came into existence on 19 December 2008.

The company's Governance Board structure follows the Community Sector Board model established by the former Noosa Council to ensure community engagement in its planning and operations.

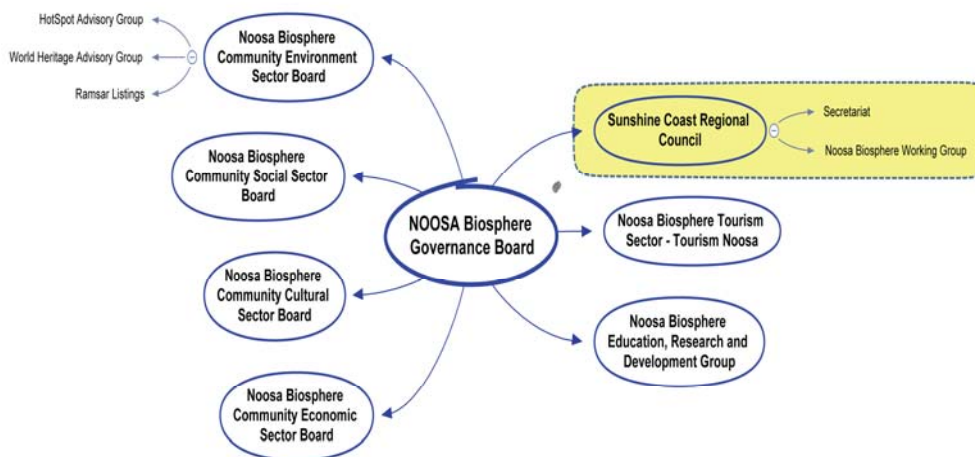
The Governance Board holds decision-making powers for the Noosa Biosphere and its Directors comprise Divisions 11 and 12 Councillors Russell Green and Lew Brennan, one director from each of the five community sector boards, one director from Tourism Noosa and three directors from the wider community.

The community sector boards develop the interests of the Biosphere in the following areas:

1. Culture;
2. Education, Research and Development;
3. Social;
4. Economic; and
5. Environment.

The existing award-winning tourism organisation, Tourism Noosa, is also involved as an advisory board under the Governance Board structure.

This diagram illustrates the interconnections of the various groups involved in directing the Noosa Biosphere Reserve.



Biosphere Reserves are established to achieve three complementary functions:

- **Conservation** – to contribute to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation
- **Sustainable Development** – to foster economic and human development that is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable, and therefore compatible with the first function
- **Logistic support** – to support demonstration projects, environmental education and training, research and monitoring related to local, regional, national and global issues, in support of the first two functions. This function can be summarised as “learning”.

Consistent with these functions, Noosa Biosphere Reserve's Vision Statement is:

Your Noosa Biosphere will be a learning community that cultivates harmony between people and nature, for both conservation and sustainable development.

Further enquiries:

Helen Gregory, Community Governance Project Officer, Phone: 07 5449 5122

Michael Donovan, Chair Noosa Biosphere Governance Board, Phone: 0407 600 939